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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

RADIO-TV ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE NATION  
FROM THE WHITE HOUSE  
OCTOBER 22, 1962

(AS ACTUALLY DELIVERED)

Good evening, my fellow citizens:

This government, as promised, has maintained the closest surveillance of the Soviet military build-up on the island of Cuba. Within the past week, unmistakable evidence has established the fact that a series of offensive missile sites is now in preparation on that imprisoned island. The purpose of these bases can be none other than to provide a nuclear strike capability against the Western Hemisphere.

Upon receiving the first preliminary hard information of this nature last Tuesday morning at 9:00 a.m., I directed that our surveillance be stepped up. And having now confirmed and completed our evaluation of the evidence and our decision on a course of action, this government feels obliged to report this new crisis to you in fullest detail.

The characteristics of these new missile sites indicate two distinct types of installations. Several of them include Medium Range Ballistic Missiles, capable of carrying a nuclear warhead for a distance of more than 1000 nautical miles. Each of these missiles, in short, is capable of striking Washington, D. C., the Panama Canal, Cape Canaveral, Mexico City, or any other city in the Southeastern part of the United States, in Central America, or in the Caribbean area.

Additional sites not yet completed appear to be designed for intermediate range ballistic missiles -- capable of traveling more than twice as far -- and thus capable of striking most of the major cities in the Western Hemisphere, ranging as far North as Hudson's Bay, Canada, and as far South as Lima, Peru. In addition, jet bombers, capable of carrying nuclear weapons, are now being uncased and assembled in Cuba, while the necessary air bases are being prepared.

This urgent transformation of Cuba into an important strategic base -- by the presence of these large, long-range, and clearly offensive weapons of sudden mass destruction -- constitutes an explicit threat to the peace and security of all the Americas, in flagrant and deliberate defiance of the Rio Pact of 1947, the traditions of this Nation and Hemisphere, the Joint Resolution of the 87th Congress, the Charter of the United Nations, and my own public warnings to the Soviets on September 4 and 13. This action also contradicts the repeated assurances of Soviet spokesmen, both publicly and privately.

The size of this undertaking makes clear that it has been planned for some months. Yet only last month, after I had made clear the distinction between any introduction of ground-to-ground missiles and the existence of defensive anti-aircraft missiles, the Soviet Government publicly stated on September 11 that, and I quote, "The armaments and military equipment sent to Cuba are designed exclusively for defensive purposes," and, and I quote the Soviet Government, "There is no need for the Soviet Government to shift its weapons for a retaliatory blow to any other country, for instance Cuba," and that, and I quote the government, "The Soviet Union has so powerful rockets to carry these nuclear warheads that there is no need to search for sites for them beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union." That statement was false.

Only last Thursday, as evidence of this rapid offensive build-up was already in my hand, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko told me in my office that he was instructed to make it clear once again, as he said his government had already done, that Soviet assistance to Cuba, and I quote, "pursued solely the purpose of contributing to the defense capabilities of Cuba," that, and I quote him, "training by Soviet specialists of Cuban nationals in handling defensive armaments was by no means offensive," and that "if it were otherwise," Mr. Gromyko went on, "the Soviet Government would never become involved in rendering such assistance." That statement also was false.

Neither the United States of America nor the world community of nations can tolerate deliberate deception and offensive threats on the part of any nation, large or small. We no longer live in a world where only the actual firing of weapons represents a sufficient challenge to a nation's security to constitute maximum peril. Nuclear weapons are so destructive and ballistic missiles are so swift, that any substantially increased possibility of their use or any sudden change in their deployment may well be regarded as a definite threat to peace.

For many years, both the Soviet Union and the United States, recognizing this fact, have deployed strategic nuclear weapons with great care, never upsetting the precarious status quo which insured that these weapons would not be used in the absence of some vital challenge. Our own strategic missiles have never been transferred to the territory of any other nation, under a cloak of secrecy and deception; and our history, unlike that of the Soviets since the end of World War II, demonstrates that we have no desire to dominate or conquer any other nation or impose our system upon its people. Nevertheless, American citizens have become adjusted to living daily on the bull's eye of Soviet missiles located inside the USSR or in submarines.

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(F88-934)

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In that sense, missiles in Cuba add to an already clear and present danger -- although it should be noted the nations of Latin America have never previously been subjected to a potential nuclear threat.

But this secret, swift and extraordinary build-up of Communist missiles -- in an area well known to have a special and historical relationship to the United States and the nations of the Western Hemisphere, in violation of Soviet assurances, and in defiance of American and Hemispheric policy -- this sudden, clandestine decision to station strategic weapons for the first time outside of Soviet soil -- is a deliberately provocative and unjustified change in the status quo which cannot be accepted by this country, if our courage and our commitments are ever to be trusted again by either friend or foe.

The 1930's taught us a clear lesson: aggressive conduct, if allowed to grow unchecked and unchallenged, ultimately leads to war. This nation is opposed to war. We are also true to our word. Our unswerving objective, therefore, must be to prevent the use of these missiles against this or any other country, and to secure their withdrawal or elimination from the Western Hemisphere.

Our policy has been one of patience and restraint, as befits a peaceful and powerful nation, which leads a worldwide alliance. We have been determined not to be diverted from our central concerns by mere irritants and fanatics. But now further action is required -- and it is underway; and these actions may only be the beginning. We will not prematurely or unnecessarily risk the costs of worldwide nuclear war in which even the fruits of victory would be ashes in our mouth -- but neither will we shrink from that risk at any time it must be faced.

Acting, therefore, in the defense of our own security and of the entire Western Hemisphere, and under the authority entrusted to me by the Constitution as endorsed by the Resolution of the Congress, I have directed that the following initial steps be taken immediately:

1) First: To halt this offensive build-up, a strict quarantine on all offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba is being initiated. All ships of any kind bound for Cuba from whatever nation or port will, if found to contain cargoes of offensive weapons, be turned back. This quarantine will be extended, if needed, to other types of cargo and carriers. We are not at this time, however, denying the necessities of life as the Soviets attempted to do in their Berlin blockade of 1948.

2) Second: I have directed the continued and increased close surveillance of Cuba and its military build-up. The Foreign Ministers of the OAS, in their communique of October 6, rejected secrecy on such matters in this Hemisphere. Should these offensive military preparations continue, thus increasing the threat to the Hemisphere, further action will be justified. I have directed the Armed Forces to prepare for any eventualities; and

- 3) Third: It shall be the policy of this Nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States, requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union.
- 4) Fourth: As a necessary military precaution, I have reinforced our base at Guantanamo, evacuated today the dependents of our personnel there, and ordered additional military units to be on a standby alert basis.
- 5) Fifth: We are calling tonight for an immediate meeting of the Organ of Consultation under the Organization of American States, to consider this threat to hemispheric security and to invoke Articles 6 and 8 of the Rio Treaty in support of all necessary action. The United Nations Charter allows for regional security arrangements -- and the nations of this Hemisphere decided long ago against the military presence of outside powers. Our other allies around the world have also been alerted.
- 6) Sixth: Under the Charter of the United Nations, we are asking tonight that an emergency meeting of the Security Council be convoked without delay to take action against this latest Soviet threat to world peace. Our resolution will call for the prompt dismantling and withdrawal of all offensive weapons in Cuba, under the supervision of UN observers, before the quarantine can be lifted.
- 7) Seventh and finally: I call upon Chairman Khrushchev to halt and eliminate this clandestine, reckless and provocative threat to world peace and to stable relations between our two nations. I call upon him further to abandon this course of world domination, and to join in an historic effort to end the perilous arms race and transform the history of man. He has an opportunity now to move the world back from the abyss of destruction -- by returning to his government's own words that it had no need to station missiles outside its own territory, and withdrawing these weapons from Cuba -- by refraining from any action which will widen or deepen the present crisis -- and then by participating in a search for peaceful and permanent solutions.

This Nation is prepared to present its case against the Soviet threat to peace, and our own proposals for a peaceful world, at any time and in any forum -- in the OAS, in the United Nations, or in any other meeting that could be useful -- without limiting our freedom of action. We have in the past made strenuous efforts to limit the spread of nuclear weapons. We have proposed the elimination of all arms and military bases in a fair and effective disarmament treaty. We are prepared to discuss new proposals for the removal of tensions on both sides -- including the possibilities of a genuinely independent Cuba, free to determine its own destiny. We have no wish to war with the Soviet Union -- for we are a peaceful people who desire to live in peace with all other peoples.

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But it is difficult to settle or even discuss these problems in an atmosphere of intimidation. That is why this latest Soviet threat -- or any other threat which is made either independently or in response to our actions this week -- must and will be met with determination. Any hostile move anywhere in the

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world against the safety and freedom of peoples to whom we are committed -- including in particular the brave people of West Berlin -- will be met by whatever action is needed.

Finally, I want to say a few words to the captive people of Cuba, to whom this speech is being directly carried by special radio facilities. I speak to you as a friend, as one who knows of your deep attachment to your fatherland, as one who shares your aspirations for liberty and justice for all. And I have watched and the American people have watched with deep sorrow how your nationalist revolution was betrayed -- and how your fatherland fell under foreign domination. Now your leaders are no longer Cuban leaders inspired by Cuban ideals. They are puppets and agents of an international conspiracy which has turned Cuba against your friends and neighbors in the Americas -- and turned it into the first Latin American country to become a target for nuclear war -- the first Latin American country to have these weapons on its soil.

These new weapons are not in your interest. They contribute nothing to your peace and well being. They can only undermine it. But this country has no wish to cause you to suffer or to impose any system upon you. We know that your lives and land are being used as pawns by those who deny you freedom.

Many times in the past, the Cuban people have risen to throw out tyrants who destroyed their liberty. And I have no doubt that most Cubans today look forward to the time when they will be truly free -- free from foreign domination, free to choose their own leaders, free to select their own system, free to own their own land, free to speak, and write, and worship without fear or degradation. And then shall Cuba be welcomed back to the society of free nations and to the associations of this Hemisphere.

My fellow citizens: Let no one doubt that this is a difficult and dangerous effort on which we have set out. No one can foresee precisely what course it will take or what costs or casualties will be incurred. Many months of sacrifice and self-discipline lie ahead -- months in which both our patience and our will will be tested -- months in which many threats and denunciations will keep us aware of our dangers. But the greatest danger of all would be to do nothing.

The path we have chosen for the present is full of hazards, as all paths are -- but it is the one most consistent with our character and courage as a nation and our commitments around the world. The cost of freedom is always high -- but Americans have always paid it. And one path we shall never choose, and that is the path of surrender or submission.

Our goal is not the victory of might, but the vindication of right -- not peace at the expense of freedom, but both peace and freedom, here in this Hemisphere, and, we hope, around the world. God willing, that goal will be achieved.

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Thank you and good night.

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**TRANSLATION FOLLOWS**

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Ref: Circular 703

There follows Spanish language text President's address  
to nation.

Buenas noches, conciudadanos:

Nuestro gobierno, tal como lo ha prometido, ha mantenido la mas estrecha vigilancia del incremento del poderio militar sovietico en Cuba. Durante el curso de la ultima semana, se han verificado pruebas incontrovertibles de que se estan preparando una serie de bases para proyectiles nucleares ofensivos en esa desdichada isla. Al recibir la primera informacion preliminar de esta naturaleza a las 9 de la mañana del día martes pasado--la primera informacion firme de esta naturaleza que habiamos recibido--ordena que se aumentara nuestra vigilancia. Y ahora, habiendo confirmado y completado nuestra evaluacion de las pruebas y nuestra decision sobre el

3/3 - Mr. J. Lloyd

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curso de accion a tomar, nuestro gobierno se siente obligado a presentarles un informe detallado sobre esta nueva crisis.

Varias de estas bases nuevas para proyectiles son para proyectiles balisticos de alcance medio, capaces de llevar un cone de guerra nuclear por una distancia de mas de 1,000 (mil) millas nauticas. En resumen, cada uno de estos proyectiles es capaz de alcanzar a Washington, el Canal de Panama, el Cabo Canaceral, la Ciudad de Mexico, o cualquier ciudad en la region sudeste de los Estados Unidos, o de la America Central o de la zona del Caribe.

Bases adicionales, que todavia no se han completado, parecen tener en miras proyectiles balisticos de alcance intermedio--capaces de alcanzar una distancia dos veces mayor--y por lo tanto capaces de alcanzar la mayoria de las ciudades principales del Hemisferio Occidental, llegando hasta la Bahia de Hudson, el Canada, hacia el norte, y al sur hasta Lima, Peru. Ademas, los bombarderos de reaccion de alcance medio, capaces de cargar armas nucleares, se estan actualmente desembarcando y montando en Cuba, mientras se preparan las bases aereas necesarias.

Esta transformacion urgente de Cuba en una importante base estrategica--mediante la presencia de estas armas grandes, de largo alcance y de una naturaleza claramente ofensiva y con posibilidades

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de destruccion en masa e inmediata--constituye una amenaza explicita a la paz y seguridad de todas las Americas, un reto con toda una intencion y alevosia al Tratado de Rio de 1947, y a las tradiciones de esta nacion y de este hemisferio, a la Resolucion Conjunta de la 87a Sesion del Congreso, a la Carta de las Naciones Unidas y a mis propias advertencias publicas a los sovieticos, emitidas los dias 4 y 13 de septiembre. Esta accion tambien contradice las reiteradas aseveraciones de los portavoces sovieticos, formuladas tanto en privado como en publico, de que este incremento de armamento en Cuba conservaria su caracter defensivo original y de que la Union Sovietica no necesitaba ni deseaba colocar proyectiles estrategicos en el territorio de cualquier otra nacion.

La convergencia de estas medidas indican claramente que se habian preparado hace ya algunos meses. Sin embargo, apenas el 103 pasado, despues de haber yo expresas expresado claramente la diferencia entre la colocacion de proyectiles de tierra a tierra y la existencia de proyectiles antiaviones de naturaleza defensiva, el gobierno sovietico declara publicamente el 11 de septiembre que "los armamentos y equipos militares enviados a Cuba son exclusivamente para fines defensivos", y que "no existe ninguna necesidad de que la Union Sovietica traslade sus armas...para un golpe de represalia a

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cualquier otro país, por ejemplo, Cuba", y de que "la Union Sovietica tiene cobetas tan poderosas como para enseñar a conducir estos conos de guerra nucleares y no es necesario buscar sitios de lanzamiento para los mismos fuera de las fronteras de la Union Sovietica." Esta declaracion, y lamento verme obligado a decirlo, evidentemente era falsa.

Apenas el jueves pasado, al tener yo en mis manos pruebas de este rapido incremento de poderio militar en Cuba, el Míster de Relaciones Exteriores Sovietico, el Sr. Gromyko, me ji dijo en mi despacho que había recibido instrucciones de reiterar claramente que la ayuda sovietica a Cuba "tenia por objeto apenas contribuir a las capacidades defensivas de Cuba", y que "el adiestramiento prestado por especialistas sovieticos a ciudadanos cubanos para el manejo de armas defensivas no era en modo alguno de naturaleza ofensiva" y que de "ser de otra manera, el gobierno sobi sovietico jamas se prestaría a suministrar ayuda de este tipo." Esta declaracion carecia ademas de honradez y de honor.

Ni los Estados Unidos de America, ni la comunidad mundial de naciones, pueden tolerar la decepcion intencionada ni las amenazas ofensivas provenientes de cualquier nacion, sea pequena o grande.

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Ya no vivimos en un mundo cuando solamente el disparo de las armas representa un reto suficiente a la seguridad de una nacion como para constituir una violacion del Articulo 51 de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas. Las armas nucleares tienen un poder destructivo tal y los proyectiles una velocidad tal, que cualquier aumento importante de la posibilidad de su utilizacion o cualquier cambio repentino en su desplazamiento bien pueden considerarse como una amenaza concreta a la paz.

Durante el curso de muchos anos, tanto la Union Sovietica como los Estados Unidos--reconociendo esta realidad--han desplazado las armas nucleares con sumo cuidado, jamas altera alterando el delicado status quo que aseguraba que dichas armas no serian utilizadas a no existir un desafio fundamental. Nuestros propios proyectiles estrategicos jamas han sido trasladados al territorio de otra nacion bajo el manto secreto del sigilo; y nuestra historia, diferente a la de los sovieticos desde la Segunda Guerra Mundial--demuestra que no tenemos ningun deseo de dominar o conquistar a cualquier nacion ni queremos imponer nuestro sistema a cualquier pueblo..Sin embargo, los ciudadanos de los Estados Unidos se han acostumbrado a vivir diariamente como un blanco de los proyectiles sovieticos localizados en la URSS o en sus submarinos.. En este sentido, los proyectiles en Cuba

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contribuyen a aumentar un peligro claro y evidente--aunque se debe notar, que las naciones de la America Latina jamas habian estado sujetas hasta ahora a una posible amenaza nuclear.

Pero este incremento secreto, rapido y extraordinario de proyectiles comunistas--en una zona que, como es bien sabido, tiene una relacion muy especial e historica con los Estados Unidos y con las demas naciones del Hemisferio Occidental--a pesar de las aseveraciones sovieticas, que ha llevado al establecimiento repentino de armas sovieticas por vez primera fuera de territorio sovietico, en contravencion a la politica de los Estados Unidos y del hemisferio--es un cambio friamente provocador e injustificado en el status quo, el cual no puede aceptar este pais. Si es que nuestro coraje y nuestros compromisos han de ser aceptados en el futuro, sea por ~~nuestros~~ nuestros amigos o por nuestros enemigos.

La decada que se inicio en 1930 nos ha ensenado una leccion muy clara: la conducta agresiva, si se permite que siga desenfrenada y sin obstaculos, a la larga conduce a la guerra. Nuestra nacion se opone a la guerra. Pero tambien cumplimos nuestra palabra. Nuestro objetivo inmutable, por consiguiente, es de prevenir a que se utilicen estos proyectiles contra esta nacion o contra cualquier otra y de asegurarnos de que se retiren o de que sean eliminados.

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del Hemisferio Occidental.

Nuestra politica ha sido de paciencia y calma, como le corresponde a una nacion pacifica y poderosa. Estabamos decididos a que no nos desviasen de nuestras preocupaciones ni los elementos irritadores ni los fanaticos. Pero, ahora se impone la accion adicional--y esta ya se ha emprendido. Estas acciones quizas sean apenas el comienzo. No arriesgaremos prematuramente o sin necesidad una guerra nuclear total en la cual aun los frutos de la victoria serian apenas cenizas-- pero queremos que sepan todas las naciones, sean amigas o enemigas, que no titubearemos as ante este riesgo cuando si es llegado que momento de enfrentarlo.

Por consiguiente, actuando en defensa de nuestra propia seguridad y de la seguridad de todo el Hemisferio Occidental, y segun las facultades que me ha concedido la Constitucion, reiteradas en la Resolucion adoptada por el Congreso, ha ordenado que se adopten inmediatamente las siguiente medidas iniciales:

1) Primera: Con el fin de detener este incremento de poderio militar, se inicia una estricta cuara cuarentena de todo equipo militar con destino a Cuba. Se obligara a nave que vaya rumbo a Cuba, proveniente de cualquier nacion o puerto, si en ella sehallan

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cargamentos de armas ofensivas a que regrese. De ser necesario, esta cuarentena sera ampliada para incluir otros tipos de cargamentos y de naves. Sin embargo, por el momento no estamos negando entrada a los articulos de primera necesidad, como intentaron hacerlo los sovieticos en su bloqueo de Berlin en 1948.

2) Segundo: He ordenado que se continua y aumente la vigilancia estrecha de Cuba y del incremento de su poderio militar. Los Cancilleres de la OEA en su comunicado del 6 de octubre rechazaron el sigilo en lo que se refiere a estos asuntos en este hemisferio. Si continuan los preparativos militares de caracter ofensivo, aumentando asi la amenaza para el hemisferio, se emprenderan medidas adicionales. He dado instrucciones a las fuerzas armadas para que se preparen para cualquier eventualidad: y espero que, tanto en interes del pueblo cubano como de los tecnicos sovieticos localizados en estas bases, se reconozca que es imposible para nosotros tolerar esta amenaza.

3) Tercero: Sera la politica de este pais que cualquier proyectil nuclear lanzado desde Cuba contra cualquier nacion del hemisferio occidental se considere como un ataque de la Union Sovietica contra los Estados Unidos, que requeriria una respuesta total contra

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la Union Sovietica.

4. Quarto: Como medida de precaucion militar necesaria ha mandado fortalecer nuestra base de Guantanamo, retirar los familiares de nuestro personal destacado alli y que unidades militares adicionales esten preparadas y en estado de alerta.

5. Quinto: Esta noche mismo solicitaremos una reunion inmediata del Organo de Consulta de la Organizacion de los Estados Americanos para considerar esta amenaza a la seguridad hemisferica e invocar los articulos 6 y 8 del Tratado de Rio en apoyo de las medidas que sea necesario tomar. Nuestros aliados en otras partes del mundo tambien han sido avisados.

6. Sexto: De conformidad con la Carta de las Naciones Unidas- nosotros la suscribimos-solicitaremos esta noche que se celebre una reunion de emergencia del Consejo de Seguridad sin demora para tomar medidas contra esta ultima amenaza sovietica a la paz mundial. Nuestra Resolucion pedira el desmantelamiento y retiro de todas las bases y armas ofensivas de Cuba, bajo supervision de observadores de las Naciones Unidas, antes de poderse levantar la cuarentena.

7) Septimo y finalmente: Apelo al Primer Ministro Khrushchev a que ponga fin y elimine esta amenaza clandestina, irresponsable y provocadora a la paz mundial y establezca las relaciones entre

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destino. No tenemos deseos de entablar una guerra con la Union Sovietica, pues somos un pueblo pacifico que desea vivir en paz con todos los demas pueblos.

Pero es dificil resolver, e incluso discutir, estos problemas en un atm ambiente de intimidacion. Esto es por que esta ultima amenaza sovietica--o cualquier otra amenaza que pueda hacerse y sea independientemente o como reaccion a nuestras acciones de esta semana --debe hacersele frente y, de hecho, se le hara frente con decision. A cualquier accion hostil en cualquier parte del mundo contra la seguridad y libertad de los pueblos con quienes nos hemos comprometido --inclusive el valeroso pueblo de Berlin Occidental--se le hara frente con cualquier tipo de accion que sea necesaria.

Finalmente, quiero dirigir unas palabras al cautivo pueblo de Cuba, a quienes se les esta retransmitiendo este discurso por todos los medios disponibles. Les hablo como amigo, como admirador de su devocion por la libertad y la justicia, como uno que conoce su profundo amor por la patria. Juntamente con mis compatriotas he compartido las grandes esperanzas de su revolucion nacionalista con sus promesas de libertad y justicia para todos. Y he observado con profundo pesar como se han ido traicionando los ideales de esa revolucion--y como su patria ha caido bajo el dominio extranjero.

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Ahora sus dirigentes ya no son dirigentes cubanos, inspirados y guiados por los grandes principios de su revolucion nacionalista. Son tititeres y agentes de una conspiracion internacional que ha convertido a Cuba en base de agresion contra sus amigos y vecinos en America. Estas nuevas armas no defienden sus intereses. No contribuyen ni a su paz ni a su bienestar. No pueden ni siquiera contribuir a la seguridad de Cuba, sino que por el contrario la van minando. Sabemos que ustedes no consintieron a que se convirtiese a su isla en un blanco para una guerra nuclear--el primer pais latinoamericano a formar parte de esta siniestra confrontacion--el primer pais de Latinoamerica con estas armas en su propio territorio.

Es por esto que no renimos con el pueblo de Cuba; abrigamos simpatia y esperanzas por el. Sabemos que se estan utilizando sus vidas y su tierra como instrumentos en las manos de aquellos que les niegan la libertad. No deseamos causarles sufrimiento ni imponerles sistema alguno.

En el pasado, el pueblo cubano se ha levantado con frecuencia para derrocar a tiranos, tanto extranjeros como nacionales, que trataban de destruir su libertad. Y no me cabe la menor duda de que hoy en dia la inmensa mayoria de los cubanos ansia que llegue el momento en que volviera a ser libre--libre para escoger sus

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propios gobernantes, libre para escoger su propio sistema, libre para ser dueño de su propia tierras, libre para hablar, escribir y rezar sin temores ni degradacion. Y cuando termine la dominacion extranjera y cese la utilizacion de Cuba como base de subversion y agresion, con gran placer las volveremos a recibir en la sociedad de naciones libres y en las asociaciones de este hemisferio. Porque nuestro objetivo en el mundo de hoy es la paz y la libertad--y ello incluye la paz y la libertad del pueblo cubano.

Conciudadanos: nadie debe dudar de que nos hemos encaminado en un esfuerzo dificil y peligroso. Nadie pueda prever con exactitud el rumbo que ha de seguir ni las vidas o coste en que se habra de incurrir. Nos quedan por delante muchos meses de sacrificio y autodisciplina--meses en que tanto nuestra voluntad como nuestra paciencia seran puestos a prueba por parte de aquellos que quieren que hagamos mas y por aquellos que quieren que hagamos menos--meses en que muchas amenazas y denuncias non mantendran con ciertes constantemente del peligro. Pero el mayor peligro de todos seria el no hacer nada - paralizarse de temor, - renegar de nuestra palabra.

El rumbo que hemos escogido por el momento no es perfecto; ninguno lo es. Pero es el que concuerda mejor con nuestro caracter y valor como nacion y con nuestros compromisos en todo el mundo.

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La libertad tiene un precio que siempre es muy elevado--pero los  
norte americanos siempre han estado dispuestos a pagarlo. Y hay un  
camino que jamas escogeremos, y ese es el camino de la rendicion  
o el sometimiento.

Nuestro objetivo no consiste en un triunfo del poder sino en la  
reivindicacion de un derecho--no de una paz a costas de la libertad,  
sino paz y libertad, aqui en este hemisferio, y esperamos que en el  
mundo entero. Quiera si Dios que alcancemos ese objetivo.

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While final details remain to be settled concerning text, following is substance of President's address to nation scheduled for delivery 7 p.m., Monday, October 22. While any factual changes will if possible be transmitted before delivery, those posts instructed by separate telegram to deliver text to governments may use this text with suitable precaution on possible last minute revisions.

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

QUOTE: Good evening, my fellow citizens:

This Government, as promised, has maintained the closest surveillance of the Soviet military ~~build-up~~ build-up on the island of Cuba. Within the past week, unmistakable evidence has established the fact that a series of offensive nuclear missile sites is now in preparation on that unhappy island. Upon receiving the first preliminary information of this nature last Tuesday morning at 9 a.m.--the first reliable information

Drafted by:

G:UAJohnson:pag 10/22/62

Telegraphic transmission and

classification approved by:

S/S - Mr. Little

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of this nature we had ever received--I directed that our surveillance be stepped up. And having now confirmed and completed our evaluation of the evidence and our decision on a course of action, this Government feels obliged to report this new crisis to you in full detail.

Several of these new missile sites are for Medium Range Ballistic Missiles, capable of carrying a nuclear warhead for a distance of more than 1000 nautical miles. Each of these missiles, in short, is capable of striking Washington, D.C., the Panama Canal, Cape Canaveral, Mexico City, or any other city in the Southeastern part of the United States, in Central America or in the Caribbean area.

Additional sites not yet completed appear to be designed for intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles--capable of travelling more than twice as far and thus capable of striking most of the major cities in the Western Hemisphere, ranging as far north as Hudson's Bay, Canada and as far south as Lima, Peru. In addition, medium range jet bombers, capable of carrying nuclear weapons, are now being uncrated and assembled on Cuba, while the necessary air bases are being prepared.

This urgent transformation of Cuba into an important strategic base--by the presence of these large, long-range and clearly offensive weapons of sudden mass destruction--constitutes an explicit

threat to the peace and security of all the Americas, in flagrant and deliberate defiance of the Rio Pact of 1947, the traditions of this nation and Hemisphere, the Joint Resolution of the 87th Congress, the Charter of the United Nations, and my own public warnings to the Soviets on September 4 and 13. This action also contradicts the repeated assurances of Soviet spokesmen, both publicly and privately delivered, that the arms build-up in Cuba would retain its original defensive character, and that the Soviet Union had no need or desire to station strategic missiles on the territory of any other nation.

The size of this undertaking makes clear that it had been planned some months ago. Yet only last month, after I had made clear the distinction between any introduction of ground-to-ground missiles and the existence of defensive anti-aircraft missiles, the Soviet Government publicly stated on September 11 that "the armaments and military equipment sent to Cuba are designed exclusively for defensive purposes", that "there is no need for the Soviet Union to shift its weapons...for a retaliatory blow to any other country, for instance Cuba", and that "the Soviet Union has so powerful rockets to carry these nuclear warheads that there is no need to search for sites for them beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union." That

statement, I regret to say, was patently false.

Only last Thursday, as evidence of this rapid offensive build-up was in my hand, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko told me in my office that he was instructed to make it clear once again, as he said his Government had already done, that Soviet assistance to Cuba "pursued solely the purpose of contributing to the defense capabilities of Cuba", that "training by Soviet specialists of Cuban nationals in handling defensive armaments was by no means offensive", and that "if it were otherwise, the Soviet Government would never become ~~involved~~ involved in rendering such assistance." That statement also was dishonest and dishonorable.

Neither the United States of America nor the world community of nations can tolerate deliberate deception and offensive threats on the part of any nation, large or ~~xx~~ small. We no longer live in a world where only the actual firing of weapons represents a sufficient challenge to a nation's security to constitute a breach of Article 51 of the UN Charter. Nuclear weapons are so destructive, and ballistic missiles are so swift, that any ~~xxxx~~ substantially increased possibility of their use or any sudden change in their deployment may well be regarded as a definite threat to the peace.

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For many years, both the Soviet Union and the United States -- recognizing this fact--have deployed strategic nuclear weapons with great care, never upsetting the precarious status quo which ensured that these weapons would not be used in the absence of some vital challenge. Our own strategic missiles have never been transferred to the territory of any other nation under a cloak of secrecy and deception; and our history-- unlike that of the Soviets since World War II--demonstrates that we have no desire to dominate or conquer any other nation or impose our system upon its people. Nevertheless, American citizens have become adjusted to living daily on the bull's eye of Soviet missiles located inside the USSR or in submarines. In that sense, missiles in Cuba add to an already clear and present danger--although, it should be noted, the nations of Latin America have never previously been subjected to a potential nuclear threat.

But this secret, swift and extraordinary build-up of communist missiles--in an area well-known to have a special and historical relationship to the United States and the nations of the Western Hemisphere-- in violation of Soviet assurances, in suddenly stationing strategic weapons for the first time outside of Soviet soil, in defiance of American and Hemispheric policy--is a deliberately

provocative and unjustified change in the status quo which cannot be accepted by this country, if our courage and our commitments are ever to be trusted again by either friend or foe.

The 1930's taught us a clear lesson: aggressive conduct, if allowed to grow unchecked and unchallenged, ultimately leads to war. This nation is opposed to war. We are also true to our word. Our unswerving objective, therefore, must be to prevent the use of these missiles against this or any other country, and to secure their withdrawal or elimination from the Western Hemisphere.

Our policy has been one of patience and restraint, as befits a peaceful and powerful nation. We were determined not to be diverted from our central concerns by mere irritants and fanatics. But further action is now required--and it is underway; and these actions may only be the beginning. We will not prematurely or unnecessarily risk the costs of world-wide nuclear war in which even the fruits of victory would be ashes in our mouth--but let every nation know, be it friend or foe, that we will not shrink from that risk at any time it must be faced.

Acting, therefore, in the defense of our own security and that of the entire Western Hemisphere, and under the authority entrusted to me by the Constitution as endorsed by the Resolution of the Congress,

I have directed that the following initial steps be taken immediately:

1) First: to halt this offensive build-up, a strict quarantine on all offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba is being <sup>initiated</sup> ~~initiated~~. All ships bound for Cuba, from whatever nation or port, will, if found to contain cargoes of offensive weapons, be turned back. This quarantine will be extended, if needed, to other types of cargo and carriers. We are not at this time, however, denying access or the necessities of life as the Soviets attempted to do in their Berlin blockade of 1948.

2) Second: I have directed the continued and increased close surveillance of Cuba and its military build-up. The Foreign Ministers of the OAS in their communique of October 6 rejected secrecy on such matters in this Hemisphere. Should offensive military preparations continue, thus increasing the threat to the Hemisphere, further action will be undertaken. I have directed the armed forces to prepare for any eventualities: and I trust that, in the interest of both the Cuban people and the Soviet technicians at these sites, our inability to tolerate this threat will be recognized.

3) Third: It shall be the policy of this nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States

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requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union.

4) Fourth: As a necessary military precaution, I have reinforced our base at Guantanamo, evacuated the dependents of our personnel there and ordered additional military units to stand by on an alert basis.

5) Fifth: We are calling tonight for an immediate meeting of the Organ of Consultation under the Organization of American States, to consider this threat to hemispheric security and to invoke Articles 6 and 8 of the Rio Treaty in support of all necessary action. Our other allies around the world have also been alerted.

6) Sixth: Under the Charter of the United Nations--and we subscribe to that Charter--we are asking tonight that an emergency meeting of the Security Council be convoked without delay to take action against this latest Soviet threat to world peace. Our Resolution will call for the dismantling and withdrawal of all offensive bases and weapons in Cuba, under the supervision of UN observers, before the quarantine can be lifted.

7) Seventh: and finally: I call upon Chairman Khrushchev to halt and eliminate this clandestine, reckless and provocative threat to world peace and to stable relations between our two nations. I call upon him further to abandon this course of world domination, and

to join with us and others in an historic effort to end the perilous arms race and transform the history of man. He has an opportunity now to move the world back from the abyss of destruction--by returning to his government's own words that it had no need to station missiles outside its own territory, and withdrawing these weapons from Cuba--by refraining from any action which will widen or deepen the present crisis--and then by resuming our mutual search for peaceful and permanent solutions.

This nation is prepared to present its case against this Soviet threat to peace and our own proposals for a peaceful world at any time and in any forum--in the OAS, in the United Nations, or in any other meeting that could be useful. We have in the past made strenuous efforts to limit the spread of nuclear weapons. We have proposed the elimination of all arms and overseas bases in a fair and effective disarmament treaty. We are prepared to discuss new proposals for the removal of tensions on both sides--including the possibilities of a genuinely independent Cuba, free to determine its own destiny. We have no wish to war with the Soviet Union; for we are a peaceful people who desire to live in peace with all other peoples.

But it is difficult to settle or even discuss these problems in

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an atmosphere of intimidation. That is why this latest Soviet threat--or any other threat which is made either independently or in response to our actions this week--must and will be met with determination. Any hostile action anywhere in the world against the safety and freedom of peoples to whom we are committed--including the brave people of West Berlin-- will be met by whatever action is needed.

Finally, I want to say a few words to the captive people of Cuba, to whom this speech is being directly carried by every available medium. I speak to you as a friend, as an admirer of your dedication to freedom and justice, as one who knows of your deep attachment to your fatherland. Along with my fellow Americans, I have shared the great hopes of your nationalist revolution promising liberty and justice for all. And I have watched with deep sorrow how the ideals of that revolution were betrayed--and how your fatherland fell under foreign domination. Now your leaders are no longer Cuban leaders--inspired by the great principles of your nationalist revolution. They are puppets and agents of an international conspiracy which has turned Cuba into a base of aggression against your friends and neighbors in the Americas.

These new weapons are not in your interest. They contribute nothing to your peace and well-being. They cannot even contribute to the security of Cuba but only undermine it. We know you did not consent to the transformation of your island into a target for nuclear war--the first Latin American country to become involved in this grim confrontation-- the first Latin American country to have these weapons on its soil.

That it why we have no quarrel with you, the people of Cuba, only sympathy and hope. We know your lives and land are being used as pawns by those who deny you freedom. We have no wish to cause you to suffer or to impose any system upon you.

Many times in the past, the Cuban people have risen to throw our tyrants--both foreign and domestic--who tried to destroy their liberty. And I have no doubt that the vast majority of Cubans today looks forward to the time when they will once again be free--free to choose their own leaders, free to select their own system, free to own their own land, free to speak and write and worship without fear or degradation. And when foreign domination is ended, and the use of Cuba as a base of subversion and aggression has ceased, we shall gladly welcome her back to the society of free nations and to the associations of this Hemisphere. For our goal in the world today is

peace and freedom--and that includes the peace and freedom of the Cuban people.

My fellow citizens: let no one doubt that this is a difficult and dangerous effort on which we have set out. No one can foresee precisely what course it will take or what costs or casualties will be incurred. Many months of sacrifice and self-discipline lie ahead--months in which both our will and our patience will be tested by those who would have us do more and those who would have us do less--months in which many threats and denunciations will keep us aware of our danger. But the greatest danger of all would be to do nothing--to be paralyzed by fear--to go back on our word.

The path we have chosen for the present is not perfect, as no path is--but it is the one most consistent with our character and courage as a nation and our commitments around the world. The cost of freedom is always high--but Americans have always paid it. And one path we shall never choose is the path of surrender or submission.

Our goal is not the victory of might but the vindication of right--not peace at the expense of freedom, but both peace and freedom, here in this Hemisphere, and, we hope, around the world. God willing, that goal will be achieved.

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